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Purves, Alex C

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in particular on two works inspired by *The Lysistrata Project*: Marina Kotzamani's project (2004), in which she invited Arab writers to outline how they would stage the play in their countries; and *Salam El-Nisaa (A Peace of Women)*, an adaptation of *Lysistrata* by the Egyptian playwright and film director Lenin El-Ramly (2004). This analysis is very well articulated and supported by appropriate bibliographic references.

S.'s 'new version' concludes the book. It is a readable version, full of contemporary witty remarks, adapted for the modern stage and, as said above, suitable for being performed and updated into a contemporary farce anywhere, thanks to the useful suggestions given in the footnotes.

Despite a few shortcomings, above all in terms of updated bibliographic references pertaining to the question of Aristophanes' seriousness, overall this is a book conveniently accessible for all kinds of reader, from generalists to specialists.

University of Idaho

ROSANNA LAURIOLA
lauriola@uidaho.edu

ANCIENT TIME

DUNN (F.M.) *Present Shock in Late Fifth-century Greece*. Pp. xii + 239. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2007. Cased, US\$75. ISBN: 978-0-472-11616-4.

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D.'s compelling book offers much more than its title implies. Like Toffler's *Future Shock*, written in 1970 to describe the effect of the future crowding in on the present, D.'s work argues that in late fifth century Athens a major shift occurred in the way that time was experienced and conceptualised. In this period, driven in part by the political and military events of 413, 411 and 403, but also by questions arising in philosophy, literature and medical texts, Athenians began to evaluate their lives not as they previously had in terms of the authority of the past, but rather through the immediacy of the present.

D. argues that changes in late fifth century Athens were 'in their own way ... just as rapid and potentially cataclysmic' as the events of the late 1960s that inspired Toffler's work, leading to what he will call 'present shock' (p. 2). Yet although I agree with D. about the magnitude and speed of these changes and their disorientating effect (p. 2), the word 'shock' does not sum up the real tenor of this book; rather it is the qualities of indeterminacy, uncertainty and even sensitivity in the face of a rapidly-changing present that best evoke what D. describes and analyses here. A second important aspect and great strength of this book is its discussion of ancient time in general. The first two chapters offer an excellent, detailed resource for the complex ways in which the Greeks of this period calculated and theorised time, encompassing a number of different subjects, from the mechanics of the water clock to the sophist's analysis of *kairos*. This sets the stage for the following three chapters (and epilogue), where D. offers readings of a variety of texts, with an emphasis on the role of the present in Euripides, Thucydides and the Hippocratic author of *Ancient Medicine*. The result is an invigorating and rewarding book that makes us re-evaluate familiar texts and familiar moments in Athenian history through a rich conceptual framework.

D. assesses the impact of the present through a variety of methods. These range from an examination of ancient practical and theoretical deliberations to an analysis of form and content in a number of literary works. In the latter case, D. masterfully shows how Thucydides places the reader 'in a virtual present as events unfold' (p. 124), through narrative techniques such as the use of the historical present and vivid future, the frequent recurrence of *παρών*, the arranging of events into discrete, serialised local units rather than an overarching grand plan, and the absence of marked authorial hindsight or foreshadowing. In doing so, 'the author reproduces [for the reader] the experience of awaiting unknown future developments' (p. 115), and it is precisely these unknowns that D. shows Thucydides' characters struggling with. By contrast, Herodotus is more interested in past events than present ones and tends to spell out where his plot is heading in advance, as we are told from the beginning with Candaules (*χρῆν γὰρ Κανδαύλη γενέσθαι κακῶς*, p. 122, Hdt. 1.8.2). D.'s analysis of Euripides proves similarly illuminating. Instead of presenting plots and characters weighed down by the past (e.g. Aesch. *Ag.*), the tragedian either dispenses with the past briskly in the prologue or, more unconventionally, opens with a character in a state of complete and radical uncertainty about the present (Eur. *IA.*). In several of Euripides' plays, as D. shows, we see characters wrestling with the experience and challenges of living through the present, and Euripides' well-known capacity to surprise his audience itself reproduces this effect.

The present has always been a difficult temporal category to conceptualise and the one that is most regularly eclipsed, yet rather than see it as a single, almost imperceptible dot on a timeline, D. shows how the present is much better understood as something that is thick, filled with mundane details running along multiple paths and within which the subject is immersed. Thus D. argues that the 'banal spheres' (p. 168) of some late fifth century texts (such as military resources in Thucydides' 'Archaeology' or diet in *Ancient Medicine*) are important for their ability to reveal the dense, complex processes of change and human development. In the late fifth century change and innovation, even improvisation, grow out of these webs of detail as much as from bold single strokes, evolving not through divine law or teleology but accretion and trial and error. Similarly, by alerting us to the temporal ramifications of the 'busyness' of Euripides' plots, where incident, accident and undecidedness abound (p. 85) and which, as Aristophanes noted, are often crammed with quotidian detail and irrelevant events, D. draws our attention to the degree to which the thick, complex reality of the present determines the tenor and outcome of his plays.

In each case, the slow struggle with the experience of living through the now of the everyday, of being faced with choices neither anticipated nor predetermined, is political and ideological. The human capacity to improvise and change course at any moment that is dramatised in these late fifth century texts speaks to the Athenians' active engagement in civic decision-making and events. D. argues that democracy fostered the community's sense of participation within the present, both through its real-time deliberation process and through a concern with community. The political dimension of Athens' turn toward the present constitutes an important and pervasive factor of D.'s argument, and he goes on to suggest that the shift from the past to the present led not only to new political but also new ethical concerns. This point is mentioned first in an early chapter in relation to Antiphon's attempt to offer practical therapy in his 'Painless Lectures', but it is fleshed out more fully at the end of the book, in a reading of Thucydides' Periclean funeral speech. There, D. invites us to view the speech's focus on the living rather than

the dead as a reflection of contemporary interest in the present, by arguing that Pericles' innovation denotes compassionate and ethical engagement with the city and its concerns. In this way, the speech represents a marked departure from the traditional funeral oration which sought, through an almost exclusive emphasis on the dead, to move the city into timelessness (Loraux).

This book is neither fully synchronic nor fully diachronic (pp. 7–9). Nor can it be comprehensive. D. states instead that his method is to 'embrace[e] a wide range of disciplines [paying attention] to the peculiarities of each one' within a 'relatively brief period of upheaval and transition' (p. 192). There is a before and after to this period, and the before proves particularly useful to D. in articulating the difference between the way in which late fifth century writers diverged from earlier ones, such as Hesiod, Aeschylus, Sophocles and Herodotus, who relied on the authority of the past and a more predetermined sense of plot and causality. In the book's epilogue D. deals with the after, by showing how through a series of 'aftershocks', the late fifth century's shift toward the present merged in the fourth century into a return to more traditional temporal systems and less novel methods of assessing and presenting one's position in time. But it is the close and sustained readings of the period under question that yield the real rewards of this book – having made its readers engage seriously with a vast category of disparate questions, from narrative form and technique to political ideology to the conceptualisation of time – guided all the while by D.'s engaging prose and innovative approach.

University of California, Los Angeles

ALEX C. PURVES
purves@humnet.ucla.edu

COMMEMORATIVE LITERATURE

GRETHLEIN (J.) *The Greeks and their Past. Poetry, Oratory and History in the Fifth Century BCE*. Pp. xii + 350, ills. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010. Cased, £55, US\$95. ISBN: 978-0-521-11077-8.

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In this book, G. attempts a cross-generic study of commemorative literature in the fifth century B.C.E. He moves skilfully from lyric and elegy, through tragedy and oratory, to arrive at a convincing contextualisation of Herodotus' and Thucydides' histories as rivals and comrades to the commemorative genres and literatures of their time. G. claims two goals: first, 'to reconstruct the literary field of memory in fifth-century BCE Greece, teasing out the diversity of attitudes towards the past as well as elucidating their common ground' and, second, 'to shed new light on poetry and prose in fifth-century BCE Greece' (p. 12). As for the first goal, G. is successful at showing the diversity of attitudes towards the past and provides a good start for anyone interested in the very complicated project of understanding memory in fifth-century literature. As for the second, G. adds much to our understanding of the rise of Greek historiography, exposing how Herodotus and Thucydides work against other commemorative genres in order to assert the importance and superiority of their particular modes of memory.

There is much to commend in G.'s approach to material whose diversity and idiosyncrasies could easily eclipse any attempt to impose order. The book is a model of clarity. Divided into two parts, the first on memory in non-historiographic